/102 cont./

764 coffin and the women behind it. The people who carry the
604 coffin while on the way ask the deceased's son-in-law for wine
[606] to drink, without which they would not proceed. Arriving at the burial ground the "empress' relative" throws down the torch on the grave, and returns the grass sword to the host. The grave
[372] pit has already been dug by men sent ahead. Now they burn oiled hemp stalks, which is called "warming up the grave."
764 A geomancer is on hand to mark out the eight diagrams /used
787 in Chinese system of divination/ with rice at the bottom of the
[791] grave, and a cock is let down into the pit to peck at the rice,
[177] in order to divine the good and bad luck of the host's family. If the cock eats the rice on the left side, then the male members will have good luck, if on the right side, then the female members will have peace. If it eats in the center then both men and women will have luck. After the coffin is laid in the
764 pit, the geomancer, holding a sheng of white, polished rice,
791 stands at the head of the coffin and scatters the rice, making complimentary remarks. The mourning filial son and others kneel at the foot of the coffin, catch the rice in their clothes. After the burial, the geomancer holds a flat, called the "calling-back-the-soul flag," and leads the procession back, and when
● [774] they arrive at the bereaved family's house, everyone puts a few grains of cooked rice in the mouth to avoid losing the soul.
764 The sorcerer, carrying a bamboo tube full of water, stands at
756 the junction of crossroads or at the main entrance and scatters water with a broom made of green grass, uttering spells, to get rid of the tainted air and to dispel evil spirits.

765 After returning from the grave and attending to the dispersal of all the relatives and friends from everywhere, the host then must provide a feast for the "torch wine and meat" men brought along by the "empress' relative." If after they have eaten again and again, the hospitality is still inadequate, often it may cause "other shoots to sprout /i.e. troubles/." and cause
[605] trouble for the host. After the meal, the paternal third cousin
[604] /?/ departs, but the "empress' relative" himself remains.

/127 cont./

776 with the ability or knowledge within the domain of the profane
[771] appears, then they consider it to be the working of kuei /128/
This gives rise to fear or hope, prayers or opposition. There is
* [782] only one method and that is to invoke the assistance of kuei
with supernatural powers and offer sacrifices to them.

Although the Miao do not differentiate between shen and kuei, they do believe that there is a difference between good and bad kuei. The good kuei live in the yin/supernatural/world
772 of heaven [ta] piaV. The earth, on which people live, is the
776 yang /mundane/ world. They do not have the theory of hell, but they believe that under the earth there lives a different kind of human beings. These people are as big as the little finger and live in houses plaited of mugwort and grass. A
774 human being has soul [pienV] and a body [koY-ʻieŋY/. When
[828] one dreams it is an excursion of the soul while the body is
[753] asleep. When a person is sick and cannot be cured by medicine, then it is said that his soul has been taken away by a kuei. When a person becomes unconscious, his body has been seized by a ku woman. When a man dies, his soul ascends to heaven,
775 and he comes to the realization of death only when he hears the
[961] crash of thunder or when a Miao sorcerer comes to search for him. Those who suffer a sudden or violent death, such as from
[776] knife or spear wound, or from difficult childbirth, rolling into a gully, or falling into a pit, after death many become evil kuei. They are unable to go up to heaven; they are either immediately reborn into another state of existence and come back to life, or remain in the world to make trouble for people.
776 If a streak of black vapor is seen at night, they consider it the
821 manifestation of a kuei and people cry out, "[pɛY tsʻəɯ]"
[789] (meaning "drive away"), to expel them. The Miao for the most part believe that all natural phenomena have kuei as their controlling power. Hence the wind has a wind kuei [kueŋY
[824] ɕoV] and trees, tree kuei [kueŋY nduV]. When there is a
* [782] violent storm with wind, thunder, and rain, they must burn
[237] beeswax in order to honor the kuei. What has been stated above are the native beliefs of the Miao. In recent years,

/143 cont./

*782 and the left and right forelegs to the "third- and fourth-leg-bearing" relatives. The breast portion goes to the sorcerer-priest.

In the morning of the third day, the sorcerer-priest once more performs his ritual in the main house. At the same time the guests are leaving. Besides the "leg-bearing" relatives, who each [574] receives a leg, the other friends and relatives all get portions of the beef from six liang to half a chin, sometimes as much as two chin, depending upon the degree of intimacy they have with the host.

(5) Redeeming the Soul

755 Should a person fall ill while at the market or any other
*782 place through drinking well water or river water, the Miao con-
•774 sider this to be his losing his soul. Then they ask a sorcerer-
[753] priest to come to redeem the soul. In Miao this is called [lio⁴
[776] kuei³⁴], originally meaning "kuei of springs." The two kuei in-voked are called [nan³ nɛ⁴ lio⁴ u⁴] and [nan³ mɛ⁴ lio⁴ te³⁴]. The time is in broad daylight, the place in front of the main entrance or any vacant ground. A table is set up on the ground, on which are laid five bowls of wine, five bowls of meat, three sticks of incense. The Miao sorcerer uses only a pair of chiao-tzu and utters an incantation which in general states:

> "Some time ago the host drank water at a well. Perhaps his soul was caught by the duke or the old lady of the well, with the result that he has become sick. There are pains in his hands and feet, making his movements up and down very difficult. Each time he sees a stone staircase, his heart flutters. Now we come with wine and meat to redeem his soul, with silver and gold to redeem his soul. Pray, release his soul quickly so that he can have an early recovery."

Although the Miao sorcerer holds the chiao-tzu in his hands he does not divine with them. After the incantation he burns the paper to send off the kuei.

worshipped the spirits of their ancestors. Mountains, sacred trees, sacred stones and the door are objects of worship. Unlike the Chinese, Flowery Miao have neither temples, shrines nor idols. 771 [341]

The tree cult, ultimately connected with the fertility of the land and the fecundity of the cattle, is extremely elaborate. Each village reverences some local tree (or stone) and should this stand on a higher elevation than the houses which it can, as it were, overlook, it is particularly efficacious. Such a tree is the village guardian. To strip the bark from it or even to break a twig would be sacrilege. 774

No religious ceremony is of more importance than the worship of the door. So highly is the ceremony esteemed that children are never allowed to touch a door to which a sacrifice has been offered. The ceremony itself recalls some features of the Passover Feast. A sorcerer may determine a propitious day for the sacrifice, but he is never permitted to attend the ceremony. The head of the household acts as priest; no mention of the rite is made to neighbours and only members of the family are allowed to be present. 796 782

This is the usual procedure. Towards the close of day, the very dirty house is swept clean. At dusk, the door is closed, after which, until daylight on the following morning, no one may enter or depart. A young female pig is held close to the door; its throat cut, and the blood drained into a hole under the jamb on which the door is hung. The bristles and blood, and the [356]

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

The soul, if we may speak of it in the singular, is about the size of a person. It is not flesh, but shadowy. It is generally invisible but not invariably so. Some say that if a person is good his soul is larger and that if he is evil his soul is smaller. The soul does not sleep when a person sleeps. It may wander away and if it does not return the person dies. All birds, animals, and many inanimate things have souls. These include trees, rocks, rivers, and mountains. 774

The shadow is a vital part of a human being. If a mad dog bites a man's shadow, it will kill him. It is worse for a man's shadow to be bitten or cut with a knife than for his body to be bitten or cut. Many of the Ch'uan Miao identify one's shadow with his soul. Therefore at night they place the lamps on low tables or stools so that the souls or shadows will be large and frighten away the demons. Some think the souls are small after death so that they must climb up into bowls in order to eat or drink.

The Ch'uan Miao sometimes find it difficult to say that rocks, trees, mountains, and such things have souls, and find it more natural to say that they have lives, are intelligent, have eyes, and can see. But some assert that the life and the soul are the same. In offering the sacrificial animal, a life must be given and the life becomes a living animal in the world of spirits. It seems to me that the life idea was probably held by the Ch'uan Miao before the Chinese idea of three major and seven lesser souls was absorbed.

The doctrine of transmigration, and its attendant theory of cause and effect as influencing rebirth into this world, seem to be assumed and believed. But I have been unable to find much evidence that they have any considerable influence on the thinking and living of these people. Ch'uan Miao friends have told me that cause and effect, or *yin kuo* 因果, are among the things that they regard as living and that it is generally assumed that the dead person will be reborn into this world as a human being. 775

Demons are the souls of people, of birds and animals, of mountains, and of other kinds of inanimate things. If a person has no descendants to care for him, or if his descendants are unfilial and do not pay proper respect to him and do not offer him the necessary food, clothing, money, etc., then he may become a demon. Demons inhabiting rivers and creeks are the souls of people who have been drowned and who try to drown others. The demons of people who have hanged themselves try to cause others to do likewise. Some demons living in caves harm people; these develop from the vapor within the caves. (Probably this idea was caused by the presence of poisonous gases in caves). 776

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

There are many lucky and unlucky omens. It is unlucky for a hen to crow like a rooster, for a large old snake to enter one's house, for a cat or pig belonging to another family to enter one's home, for a bird flying above to drop its offal on one's head. It is lucky for a neighbor's dog to enter one's home. If a person sees an old snake have a passage, he will certainly die. If one sees a rainbow's shadow drinking water (it is believed that when a rainbow appears, it is drinking water) he must not go there and drink that water, or he will become ill. If a dog howls in a mournful way, it is unlucky, for somebody is going to die. There are many more such beliefs.

Charms are few, yet they are considered useful. Seven wooden swords are sometimes tied together, marked in parallel lines with charcoal and hung up above the front door or on the ends of wooden beams on the roof of the house to protect it from demons. A nest of hornets or wasps is sometimes hung up above the front door or on a bed. A demon stops to count the cells, which delays him until daylight when the crow of the cock frightens him away—for the crow of a cock frightens away demons. A charm written on paper by a Chinese priest is sometimes used. A neolithic or smooth stone axe may be used as a charm. Sometimes the *tuan kung* takes a piece of paper and strikes it with his fist or with a stone (neolithic) axe, after which it is a charm.

Among the Chinese the *yin yang* 陰陽 and the *fêng shui* 風水 are superhuman potencies, corresponding to the mana and the wakanda conceptions among more primitive groups. This superhuman potency is assumed rather than theorized upon by the Ch'uan Miao. It is possessed by god-like creatures such as Ntsɵ, ɤei SʌU, the dragon king, the sky demon, the demon that can step to the sky, the warty toad, etc., and by such persons as the *tuan kung*, the mo, the bo ntsoɔ, and by the demon drum, charms, incantations, the ceremonial crossbow, the *lin p'ai* 令牌, the sword, the seal, etc. The legends indicate that such power was possessed by some fans with which it was possible to fan a person up on a cliff, by feathers which could quickly warm a person or a stroke of which might cut off his head, etc.

To the Ch'uan Miao all inanimate things are thought to be sensitive and alive. The sun, the moon, the stars, rivers, mountains, rocks, trees, thunder, the echo, the rainbow, homes, fields, plains, recompense or *yin kuo* 因果 beds, marriage, swords, the harvest crop, the year, the *liu shêng* 六聲, and the sound of the ceremonial drum—all these and many other things are considered to be living things. There is much evidence of this in the legends and it is confirmed by the Ch'uan Miao themselves.

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

774 778 A year is believed to be a living thing with a head like that of a human being. The *liu shêng* is alive and when it is played it is actually speaking. Mountains have heads, feet, hands, eyes, noses, ears, hearts, breasts, veins and arteries. A plain is male and female and has a mouth, a heart, arteries, veins, and sinews. The sun and the moon have parents. Stones are male and female, grow, have offspring and can speak. Special stones have become immortals. The echo is a living being that can speak. He has a definite character and the words he speaks are generally deceptive. Thunder is a living creature. In size and shape it is like a rooster. It is small but very powerful. Its call or cry is the noise of thunder. It has a knife of fire which it throws and this is lighting. It is this knife that causes the damage when lightning strikes a person, an animal or a tree.

The Ch'uan Miao find it natural to say that all things are alive or have lives, but they find it difficult to affirm that all inanimate things have souls, although lives are intelligent, active and have eyes. Is this animatism or animatism plus animism, or is there no one word that accurately describes it?

. . . . . .

177 797 563 The greatest changes in all their history are now taking place among the Ch'uan Miao. In 1921, when I first visited these people, I was unable to find a single school or pupil among them and the attitude of the Chinese towards the Ch'uan Miao and of the Ch'uan Miao towards the Chinese was very unfriendly, as it had been for about four thousand years. Now there are under the United Methodist Mission at Chaotung sixteen junior primary Ch'uan Miao schools and one senior primary school. A Ch'uan Miao graduate of the junior middle school at Chaotung is now in the school of nursing of the United Church of Canada Hospital in Chungking and there are two students in the Goucher Junior Middle School of the West China Union University. The Chinese and the Ch'uan Miao have become very friendly and the Chinese officials and scholars are glad to help the Ch'uan Miao. Four students and one graduate of the West China Union University gave the money that makes it possible for one Ch'uan Miao student to attend the Goucher Junior Middle School. The Government of Szechwan has given the Ch'uan Miao school educational books and an organ and the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai Shek have presented to the Ch'uan Miao a fine bull, five fine cockerels, thirty apple trees and some garden seed.

The Ch'uan Miao are not only a very likeable people but they are very appreciative, are industrious, and they are eager for modern education and higher culture. With the continued help of the United Methodist Mission at Chaotung, the West China Union University, Government agencies and the Chinese people, they can become an enlighteed race that will be an asset to China as the Welsh and the Scotch are an asset to the British Empire.

[26 cont.]

000 time [about April 5th] would be quite enough.

766 164 757 Hê Miao who die of leprosy are cremated. The dead body is carried to a vacant lot to be placed on a pile of firewood and burned before the public. It is probably for the same purpose of avoiding contagion that the Hê Miao at Yung-chiang who die of small pox are cremated -- a sanitary idea derived from experiences.

5. Religious Beliefs

774 776 The Short-skirt Hê Miao apparently believe in animism. In their view every object in nature is invested with a spirit. The sky, earth, sun and moon are all nature spirits, but even rocks, rivers, bridges, trees and wells are also endowed with spiritual powers. The duties and responsibilities of these spirits, however, are not quite divided, and therefore in case of sickness, engagement and the acquisition of sons they would go to one of these objects to offer prayers, and if their prayers are fulfilled they would have to offer sacrifices. There are two kinds of spirits: the good spirits, efficacious and powerful, who guard over the welfare of the mortals, but in case of offences against them, can also inflict severe punishments; the bad spirits or ghosts, who are bent on doing harm and whom one has to suppress if one cannot put up with them. The first category of spirits includes the Jade Emperor, the Guarding Buddha, one's ancestors, the King of Hades, the Earth God, the God of Wealth, the Bodhisattva of Mercy, Yo Fei [warrior hero of the 12th century], Shen-nung [Divine Husbandman, a mythical emperor of pre-historical times], Kwan-ti [warrior hero of the 3rd century, sometimes called the God of War], tree spirits, cliff spirits, bridge spirits, the Sun God, the Moon Goddess, the winnowing-fan spirits, and the Lady Buddhas. The second category includes the spirits of thunder and lightning, the tiger ghost, the well ghost, the drowning ghost, the mouth odor ghost, the sly ghost who hurts people surreptitiously, the pu-nung (Miao dialect) ghost, the nai-huang (Miao dialect) ghost, the leg-pulling ghost, the breath-obstructing ghost, the soul-bewitching

[26 cont.]

774 ghost, the sand-throwing ghost [27], the shadow ghost, the half-
776 way ghost, the ghost of pestilence, the soul-infatuating ghost, the passing ghost, the four-path Buddha-ghost, the idle ghost, the short-legged ghost and the wall ghost. Among all these ghosts the thunder spirit and the tiger ghost are the most wicked and the most awesome. This belief is evidently influenced by geographic environments. Living in high precipitous mountains under primitive conditions, these people cannot help being struck with fear each time thunder roars and lightning flashes. Furthermore, in the thick and deep forests, fierce animals inspire additional awe in them. All these objects being so terrible in their physical form; their spirit form must be even more mysterious and frightening. Another point worthy of notice is the fact that the
177 gods they worship are greatly influenced by the Chinese. For
776 instance, the Jade Emperor, the Bodhisattva of Mercy, Kwan-ti and Yo Fei are not native gods of the Hê Miao. The tablet of Shen-nung erected by farmers next to their ancestral tablets, the God of Wealth worshipped by merchants, Lo Pan [a clever artisan of the spring and autumn period] worshipped by artisans, T'ai-shang lao-chün [title of Laotzu, here considered as a supreme Taoist god] worshipped by blacksmiths, Lei-tsu [traditionally, wife of the yellow emperor and originator of sericulture] worshipped by weavers -- all these come from Chinese sources.

756 In their intercourse with the spirits they need a medium, who is the shaman or wizard. The position of the priest among the Short-skirt Hê Miao is not hereditary, and politically and socially it does not command any special respect and authority. Anyone who feels that a spirit has seized hold of him becomes spiritually possessed and may proclaim himself a shaman. After this proclamation he would be professionally approached. There is no limitation of age for the priest. Some women too assume the role of a shaman, but they are comparatively rare. An ordinary village would have at least one priest, and a larger village, two or three. The duties of a priest may be enumerated as follows:

755 1) To attend to sickness. In the eyes of primitive peoples,
756

[27 cont.]

756 all diseases are caused by evil spirits, and to expel them is to
753 rid oneself of the diseases. In case of slight indisposition one's family members would burn incense and paper to drive away the wild ghost. But in case of serious sickness [28] the evil workings of an important ghost are presumed and it is necessary to get hold of a priest to slaughter an animal and to employ magic in order to achieve the desired end.

756 2) To pray for a son. If man is without a child at the age
842 of forty-three or forty-four he can ask a priest to appeal to the Jade Emperor for a son (the Miao do not believe in the Son-awarding Bodhisattva), or to enter the mountain to pray to a huge rock, the spirit of which is said to be able to award a child. So, in the second and the tenth month, incense is burned continuously to the rock spirit. At the time of worship two bowls of glutinous rice, five or six sticks of red incense, eight to sixteen fish as well as candles and paper money are used.

756 3) To arrest the soul. If a person is pale, thin and
774 dispirited or overtaken by serious sickness without being able to
[787] get up, the conclusion is that it is an omen of the impending departure of the soul. A priest is engaged to appear before Yen-wang (the king of Hades) to arrest the soul and bring it back. In so doing, it is necessary to slaughter a pig for sacrifice before Yen-wang. After the soul is arrested all the relatives contribute from ten or twenty cents to a dollar or two toward a fund for the making of a necklace or a bracelet, called respectively the life-preserving chain or the hundred-family lock, for wear by the stricken person. At the same time a string of bamboo rings is hung crosswise at the gate together with a piece of charm to indicate that the soul is locked in and prevented from escaping again. Sometimes, a bad harvest is also attributed to the disappearance of the soul, and the priest is asked to slaughter a duck to summon it back.

756 4) To arrest the ghost. In cooking rice, when the pan
[787] shrieks, or when the bucket in which the rice is steamed issues a shrilling sound, it indicates the presence of a ghost. The priest is asked to slaughter a cow for sacrifice, because this ghost is the thunder demon, the greatest of all ghosts, and to

[168 cont.]

776 tormenting human beings, they have no fear at all of these bad spirits, contrary to what we have seen in the "Thai" and especially in the "Man." Also the "Thai" and the "Man" consider the "Méo" as men of a special species.

[169] The "Méo" think that men have three souls, "pli," 774 775 that reincarnate themselves in the bodies of pregnant women. (See note on page 178.)

They have the priest-sorcerers who preside at the ceremonies 793 and have the power of communicating with the spirits. These priests are illiterate and receive no initiation. The tribal traditions, the curtailed rites, and the few formulas of exorcism or of incantation are orally transmitted. The office is usually hereditary.

The "Méo" celebrate a great many festivals, which are so 796 many occasions for having a spree. At the beginning of the year, the spirits of heaven, of the earth, and of the hearth are especially feted, as well as the ancestors. At planting time, sacrifices are made to the spirit of the mountains, protector of the crops. After the harvest, further sacrifices to the spirit of the mountains and to the ancestors. The third day of the fifth month, a special celebration at the time of the harvesting of medicinal herbs. Besides these cere- [527] monies on fixed dates, the "Méo" carefully celebrate the anniversaries of births and of other happy events. All these festivals consist of feasting and drinking intermingled with songs and dances. The "Méo" [157] nature is carefree and very gay; he loves music and dancing. The [531] songs, in "Méo" dialect, are always obscene and even erotic. The [533] dance, performed only by the men, is most often done while playing [535] the "sen." The player keeps his knees bent and the upper part of his body leaning forward. He jumps from one foot to the other, either while turning about or going forward or backward, but without ceasing his playing. (Photo 155, Plate 40.)

The "Méo" children very often play the game of the revolving 524 seesaw, which they probably got from the Chinese. A solid post, deeply planted in the earth, terminates at its upper end in a central peg, on which is balanced a very big pole, which has for this purpose a hole through its center. This pole is movable horizontally about the axis formed by the central peg described above. It is also movable

/72 cont./

881 The menstruating Meau girl is ashamed and tries to find out from her mother whether she is ill; she is also reticent about talking with other adults. The mother explains the facts of life to the girl, unless this has already been done by older playmates, as is usually the case. Boys naturally turn to their fathers with questions about sex.

[157] Girls as well as boys at the time of puberty become introspective, often seem absent-minded, and gradually withdraw more and more from the children's group, for which they have less and less time since they are put to work to an increasing extent. At the beginning of this period the adolescents avoid [572] the other sex; friendships between those of the same sex arise instead. The adolescents often develop an extravagant attachment to older persons of the same sex.

This behavior, especially the apparent absent-mindedness, [774] disturbs the parents. Soon it is said that the soul has left the body [756] and that evil spirits prevent it from returning. One sends for the [755] shaman, who begins his conjurations. /Ill. 18-21 appear here on unnumbered pages/ /73/ which make an extremely strong impression upon the adolescents.

887 Very soon, however, their attitude changes and strikes 836 out in the opposite direction. The pubescent Meau then seeks contacts with the other sex; they tend to stay away from members of their own sex, but especially from the younger children, and attach themselves to adults. It is not long before the girl, prompted by the older boys, begins an open flirtation, which usually leads to sexual surrender. The pubescent boys also seek sexual intercourse and approach the older, still unmarried girls, but never married women (see the section, "Courtship and Betrothal," in this chapter). They follow the older boys on their pursuit of girls and try to watch them and it is not long before they, too, are experienced in all phases of love-making (see the section, "Sexual Development," in this chapter).

883 The pubescent Meau begin to pay attention to cleanli- [515] ness and wash themselves several times a month. They think a great deal about their future. They picture their home.

[Text continues on p. 112]

/157 cont./

771 114 Under these circumstances I deemed it especially important to investigate the religious element of the Meau with the utmost care. I shall deal with the activities of the Christian missions in a special section of the chapter on "Cultural Change and Colonial-Ethnological Problems among the Mountain Peoples in Thailand." Before dealing with the native religious elements of the Meau, I must point out that at first it was difficult to penetrate into the spiritual culture of the Meau. The Meau, to be sure, do not hesitate to perform their incantations and sacrifices in the presence of strangers, but they do maintain secrecy about certain things, especially concerning religion, before persons who do not belong to the community. Chance and some knowledge of medicine helped me probe more deeply into features of the sacral life of the Meau.

123 [753] [774] Lü, the third son of the chief Tsin Tsai, became sick. His father took heart and came to me, bemoaning the fate of his son. According to Meau opinion, his soul had gone wandering and was prevented from returning by evil spirits. The efforts of the shamans had been in vain. I was easily able to determine that the sick Lü had tropical malaria, a fatal sickness for the Meau. I told the chief that many little evil spirits had entered his son's body and were sucking out the red blood. Under /158/ these circumstances it was not surprising that the soul did not dare to return to the body. He should once more ask the shaman to try his incantations, and I, too, would call on my spirits, firmly convinced that our combined efforts would be crowned with success. -- The shaman came and declared himself willing to undertake the experiment. After the ceremony, which I describe in detail in the section, "Magic, Soothsaying, and Interpretation of Omens" in this chapter, I treated the patient for malaria, which cured him of his affliction. Through this I won the sincere gratitude of the chief, and since I had declared that the shaman's assistance was absolutely necessary for the patient's recovery, he, too, was well disposed toward me. Hence everybody supported me in every conceivable way in my investigations, and I was able to penetrate more and more deeply into the spiritual culture of the Meau.

[164]

/158 cont./

A M 771 The missionary Telford (1) calls the Akha "perhaps the

1. Page 98.

most superstitious people in the state of Kengtung." According to our experience, the Akha, like all lower agriculturalists, have strong religious ties, but not nearly to the extent that the Meau have, in spite of the fact that the religion of the Akha, like that of the Meau, is definitely ancestor and spirit worship.

a) Ideas about Death and the Soul

M 761 776 The Meau regard sickness as well as the activity of evil spirits as causes of death. In their view, it may happen that in clearing land for a new rice field a tree in which a spirit dwells may be felled. Now the latter is angry at the human being who robbed him of his dwelling and kills him. Even if one should visit a spot in the forest which happens to shelter a spirit the latter regards this as a disturbance and seeks revenge on the intruder. It is therefore not surprising that a female shaman whose three sons had been the victims of an epidemic became convinced that she had built her house on a spot inhabited by an evil spirit who had taken revenge for it.

M 774 The Meau believe in an immortal soul, plĭ, which can have many shapes and leaves a sleeping human being in order to /159/ wander about invisibly. This causes dreams, for the M [753] [776] [761] [755] experiences of the wandering soul become known to the sleeper in the dream. It generally returns to the body when the person awakens, but it may also happen that evil spirits hold the soul in captivity and prevent it from returning to the body. Then illness occurs, and if incantations are of no avail, death follows.

M 774 775 614 Every person has a soul. If a person dies, his soul is reborn in the next child of the family or the sib. Souls have no sex, for it does not matter what sex the next child of the sib is; even distinguished men may thus be reborn in the body of a girl. Accordingly, there is no judgement of good and evil human beings in the other world; the soul has nothing to expect other than that it will be reborn as soon as a new child of the

/159 cont./

774 sib comes into the world. It makes no difference whether the
775 person to whom the soul belonged was good or evil in his
614 previous lifetime.

In contrast to this, Lajonquière (1) reports: "Human be-

1. II, p. 313.

ings have three souls, 'pli,' which arise again after twelve months when they enter the body of a pregnant woman. The souls of evil men are reborn in a frail child which is doomed to a miserable life and speedy death. Those of young unmarried girls haunt the paternal home, as do the souls of small children, which are reborn in the same family. All these conceptions, which are generally vague and sometimes contradictory, appear to us more like fortuitously discovered [114] stories than native doctrine." Although Abadie (2) has borrowed

2. Page 169.

these statements, too, almost literally, they have not gained in probability, at least for the Thailand area. There is much more of an impression that both authors -- for whatever reasons -- did not probe deeply into the complex religious conceptions of the Meau. I was able to determine the following:

753 According to the view of the Meau, a person becomes
774 sick when the soul does not return, but then, too, the soul leaves the body when a person becomes sick. One notices this by the fact that the person loses the zest for living and seems
775 to be absent-minded. When a person dies, /160/ the soul is always absent. It then returns to the dead body and takes up residence in it until it is buried. Then it leaves the dead body, but remains for three days in the vicinity of the grave. During this period it is given food which is placed on the grave by the survivors. Then it returns to the house and takes up permanent residence there until it is reborn. If the direct family dies out, the soul takes up residence in the house of the nearest blood relatives. When I asked what would happen if the

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775 sib died out, the informants repeatedly gave me the answer: "That does not happen." When I pointed to other peoples, it was said: "Well, we do not know what souls would do in such a case." They could not tell me any more about what happened to the souls of the insane or cretins, and similarly there was [828] no explanation for fainting.

769 When the Meau change their residence site, the souls of the dead leave the old house along with the migrants, after they 114 have been informed of the change of location through a special [775] ceremony. They then migrate with them and take up residence in the new dwelling of the family. Contrary to my findings, Lajonquière (1) reports that the souls stay in the old houses in

II, p. 319.

case of a change of residence: "A Meau who was asked by a missionary whether he worships his ancestors answered: 'Yes, they are there, and we do not take them with us!'" It seems to me that this is undoubtedly an error, for otherwise the confirmed ancestor worship and the cult associated with it among the Meau could not be explained. I do not think that there is a misconception on my part because my data are largely confirmed by various observations of other authors, and moreover a cult of the kind practiced by the Meau without the presence of ancestors could only be regarded as absurd.

753 If a soul does not find its way back to the body, it is 774 commonly assumed, as was said, that evil spirits prevent it from doing so, but it may also happen that it simply loses its way. That is, it is inquisitive and goes into the region of the clouds or into distant primeval forests among strange peoples and in doing so travels dangerous and devious paths. The owner of such a wandering soul /161/ grows weak and wastes [761] away; if one does not succeed in calling the soul back, the person dies.

775 The dead and their souls are not feared. The dead 761 body remains in the grave and decomposes; it can never return. If it should actually come back to life, this could only mean that there was a mistake and that the person had

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M 774 825 Trees, rocks, and the like do not have a soul, but some animals do, such as some tigers, but also dogs, which will be discussed in the section, "Deities and Spirits," in this chapter.

M 775 614 The souls of the ancestors exert an influence upon the lives of their descendants. They protect them against evil spirits, help wherever they can, as in case of sicknesses, which are usually caused by evil spirits, and promote the growth of field products and the well-being of domestic animals. Their most important function, however, is their concern for the perpetuation of the sib. They do this by inducing the spirit which is next in the succession of deaths to let itself be reborn as a child. There is a striking contradiction in the fact that, on the one hand, the ancestors are regarded as helpful spirits, while, on the other hand, they are reborn. Under normal circumstances the members of a sib multiply, so that more children are born than individuals of the sib die. If the ancestors are reborn in the children, the lack of further ancestors would bring about a cessation of births, or some of the children born would have to come into the world without souls. Moreover, if all the ancestors were reborn as babies, no one would remain to carry out the important functions of ancestors. I explained my doubts to various informants. Each one answered without further deliberation that there were many more ancestors from former times than could ever be reborn, for in ancient times the Meau were much more numerous than they are today. I had no reply to this logic.

A 761 Like the Meau, the Akha regard sickness as a cause of death, but they also view old age and not least the effects of black magic as causes of death. The Akha, too, believe in a

A 774 [828] [787] [756] soul, ne, which likewise /163/ leaves the body during sleep in order to wander about. Therefore, dreams are the experiences of the soul, to which, consequently, special importance is attached. One therefore does not fail to visit the shaman to have the dream experience interpreted if such an occasion arises. In any case upon awakening one must see to it that the soul is

39: Bernatzik--226 E-5 (1936-1937)1947 AO1 Thailand
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776 other cultivated land are exceptions (see the section, "Cult and Taboo," in this chapter). According to my investigations, there are in general no absolutely evil or primarily good spirits, that is to say, /165/ certain individual spirits are not regarded as representatives of evil and others as those of good. Rather, each spirit is regarded as neutral. If, however, one disturbs a spirit in his dwelling, either by cutting down the tree that represents his abode or by soiling his abode, which he finds especially unbearable if the soiling were by defecation, he becomes angry and takes his revenge on the person or persons. Only through this is the originally neutral spirit, klaň yun, transformed into an evil one, which is then called nyǒhň. In such [782] [756] cases one tries to ascertain whether he has actually offended a spirit and strives to propitiate it. In certain cases, the help of the shaman is required, which I shall discuss in greater detail.

[774] The spirits have no connection with the souls, except in the case already described, whereby a soul, through the influence of an evil spirit, becomes an evil spirit itself through its transformation into a tiger. All the spirits are invisible and can only be seen in dreams by the soul of the sleeper. They are male or female in sex, immortal, and otherwise live like human beings. They marry, have children, and cultivate rice and other products of the fields. They are particularly fond of [241] [782] visiting the rice fields of human beings, and in such a case these obviously "evil" spirits must be chased away quickly with the help of the ancestors, and the "good" spirits have to be asked to lend their assistance for the growth and increase of field products, for which a sacrifice of chickens and alcohol is promised.

[177] All the spirits look like human beings and seem to be dressed accordingly. I was told that the evil spirits wore Chinese and Thailand military uniforms!

Besides these general spirits, so to speak, there are others to which definite characteristics and activities are attributed. [726] Some spirits, for instance, have a special liking for war. One turns to them when victory for a military campaign is desired. [326] Similarly, before a Meau works at a forge, he turns to the three